DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 455 SP 036 223

AUTHOR Dinham, Steve
TITLE The Challenge of Australia's Ageing Teacher Population: In Loco Grandparentis?
PUB DATE 4 Jul 95
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Australian Council for Educational Administration (Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, July 4, 1995).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Aging in Academia; Chronological Age; Demography; *Educational Change; *Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment Patterns; Foreign Countries; Job Satisfaction; Population Trends; Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Role; *Teachers; Teacher Student Relationship; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS *Australia

ABSTRACT

This paper examines issues of Australian teachers' professional development and personal welfare, pressing issues Australian education as a period of unprecedented change has been paralleled by significant and rapid aging of the Australian teaching population. Noting that the average age of teachers is 44 and rising, the paper argues that a major challenge lies in ensuring teachers and school administrators are motivated, abreast of current developments, forward looking, innovative, and satisfied by their role. The paper reviews implications of the aging in the teaching population and explores sources of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction, based on current and recent research. The review finds that the greatest source of satisfaction is pupil achievement and teacher accomplishment. Other sources of satisfaction are recognition from others, self-growth, the mastery of subject content and teaching skills, and good relationships with students, parents, and other teachers. Overall teacher satisfaction is found to be closely tied to the human or affective domain. The paper closes by arguing that the aging of the Australian teaching population must be addressed at personal, school, and systemic levels if teachers are to bring to fruition the nation's increasing, and at times contradictory, expectations for education. (Contains 29 references.) (JB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
SYDNEY
JULY 4th 1995

THE CHALLENGE OF AUSTRALIA'S AGEING TEACHER POPULATION: *IN LOCO GRANDPARENTIS?*

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
S. Dinham
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Dr Steve Dinham
Faculty of Education,
University of Western Sydney, Nepean

ED 387 455

Abstract

Teachers' professional development and their personal welfare loom as major issues in Australian education. A period of unprecedented change has been paralleled by significant and rapid ageing of the Australian teaching population.

With the average age of teachers now 44 and rising and change continuing, a major challenge lies in ensuring teachers and school administrators are motivated, abreast of current developments, forward looking, innovative, and satisfied by their role.

Implications of the ageing teaching population are canvassed and sources of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction explored, based on current and recent research.

It is argued that the ageing of the Australian teaching population is a significant issue which must be addressed at personal, school and systemic levels if schools and teachers are to bring to fruition the nation's increasing, and at times contradictory, expectations for education.

Introduction: Change and Australian Education

There is no doubt that the past decade has seen considerable pressure for change in education worldwide, and that the sources of this pressure have come increasingly from outside traditional "educational" domains.

So far as Australia is concerned, this pressure has resulted in varying degrees of change in the areas of: teaching practice; the nature of curricula and its formation and implementation; involvement (both financial and otherwise) by the national government in education; higher post-compulsory student retention and the challenges thrown up by this; longer teacher pre-service training and increasing availability and expectations for teacher in-service activities and training and development programs; the broadening yet overcrowding of school curricula; attempts to streamline central educational bureaucracies; changes to school management, governance, and responsibilities; changing emphases from equity, to choice and diversity, to excellence and "quality"; increased community involvement at various levels in education and greater community scrutiny and expectations for education; affirmative action for various sub-groups within the community, and,

SP 036 223

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

above all, the increased politicisation and "reform" of education, the connotation of "reform" being that schools and teachers are deficient and that educational systems are in need of urgent and major overhaul (Bourke, 1994).

In many respects, schools have become the "wastebaskets of society" (Halsey, cited by Hargreaves, 1994: p. 5), being expected to solve the problems that society seems unable or unwilling to deal with. Schools and educational systems have thus probably never been more reactive or responsive to the wider changes occurring within the community. This "reactivity" can result in feelings of powerlessness, a loss of self-esteem, fatigue, stress, and even guilt on the part of teachers and school administrators, and can spill over to affect teachers' personal lives (Dinham, 1992a, 1995).

The loss of self-esteem, if accurate, is particularly of concern (see Hewett, 1990: p. 9, for a supporting view). Some teachers interviewed by the writer confessed to not revealing their occupation in public for fear of the negative reaction this sometimes provoked, while some principals admitted they described themselves as teachers rather than give their actual position for the same reason (Dinham, 1992a, 1995).

There is another aspect to change, in that while individual changes and initiatives seem perfectly reasonable expectations of teachers and schools, the change process itself may be compromised through a lack of knowledge, commitment, resources and time on the part of the implementers of such change - teachers and their school superiors - and thus it is not the change itself that is the problem, but the way change occurs (Dinham, 1992a). The other aspect, of course, is when all these "reasonable" expectations are all added one on top of the other.

There seems little doubt that the pressure for change in education will continue and even increase in the years to come, and yet the Australian teaching population as a whole is ageing considerably. A key question is how this ageing cohort will cope with such pressure and change in the decades ahead.

Australia's Ageing Population

Like many countries of similar socio-economic background, Australia is experiencing significant demographic change, particularly due to falling death and birth rates which, despite immigration, have resulted in what can be described as an ageing population. Walmsley and Sorensen (1993: pp. 51-52), in looking toward the 21st century, have noted that:

> Quite obviously, unless there is a change in the birth rate and or the level of immigration, Australia will have an increasingly elderly population and, moreover, a population growing at a steadily slower rate ... the rate of increase of the 65+ age group has two fundamental implications:
>
> 1 Because the rate of increase of this age cohort is faster than that of the working age population (even assuming no change in the age of retirement), there will be a shift in the ratio of supporters to supported within the welfare system with relatively fewer taxpayers having to support relatively more pensioners ...
>
> 2 The second implication is that the most rapidly growing age cohort is going to be the very one which places the highest demands on the welfare system, notably for health care.

As far as education is concerned, there are some additional implications. The first is that with a smaller proportion of taxpayers and a rising welfare bill, funding for

education will come under increasing pressure. The second implication is that over the next 20 years the supply of school aged Australians will be relatively constant, meaning that there may well be increased competition within and between educational systems for a largely static pool of students, unlike the situation with the post-World War II "baby boom" and its "shadow boom" 20 years later in the 1970s, which saw great growth within educational systems in Australia. Any growth in educational enrolments within schools and systems will thus be at the expense of decline in other schools and systems. Finally, a major implication is that the average age of teachers, along with the workforce generally, will increase, with the lack of pupil increase noted earlier making it difficult for "new blood" to enter educational systems.

The Ageing Teacher Population : The Situation In NSW

As recent data on Australia's student and teacher populations are difficult to obtain, information drawn from the New South Wales Department of School Education (DSE), Australia's largest educational system with over 50,000 teachers, will be used as a case study.

In December 1994, The Personnel and Employee Relations Directorate of the DSE released a report, "Demand and Supply of Teachers in NSW Government Schools 1995-2000", a report with quite alarming trends and implications, given the broader context of Australia's ageing population.

Firstly, in considering student enrolments, the report (p. 3) forecast that there will be only a 2.78% increase in combined primary and secondary government school enrolments in NSW from 1994 to 2001, an expected increase which "will create some demand for additional teaching positions", a demand of less than 200 new teachers per year based on current staffing ratios according to the Baumgart review of the staffing of NSW schools (1995: p. 7).

The DSE report also noted (1994: pp. 5-6) that in 1994, 46% of male teachers and 38% of female teachers were aged 40-49 years, with a further 20% of male teachers and 17% of female teachers being aged over 50 years. Overall, only 8% of male teachers and 15% of female teachers were under the age of 30 in 1994. However, there was considerable variation across the DSE's 10 regions, with the desirable North and South Coast regions both having only 1% of males under the age of 30 and 5% of female teachers under 30 years of age. This increasing ageing and feminisation of the teaching force is consistent with earlier data for Australia as a whole (Schools Council, 1990: p. 34).

As the Baumgart review of the staffing of NSW schools found (1995: p. 7):

> A notable characteristic of the NSW teaching force in government schools is its skewed distribution with relatively fewer teachers in the younger age brackets ... more pronounced in male than in female teachers. Teachers as a group are now on average more than 44 years of age and statistically getting ten months older each year. Approximately 66 per cent of all male teachers and 55 per cent of female teachers are over 40 years of age ... there will be a dramatic increase in retirements in the next 10-20 years.

While teacher retirement rates are expected to increase in the near future, teacher resignation rates have been declining since the 1980s, due to a number of factors such as the economic recession and the fact that older teachers tend to become "locked in" by superannuation and other commitments. Older teachers and potential employees generally also appear less attractive to alternative employers. In 1989, resignation rates for NSW Government teachers were 4.5% for primary and 6.2% for secondary teachers (5.4% overall). In 1993, these rates had declined to 2.1% for primary and 2.6% for

secondary (2.3% overall) (Personnel and Employee Relations Directorate, DSE, 1994: pp. 10-11).

Thus, the major trends concerning the teaching population in NSW are:

1. A majority of teachers over the age of 40 years
2. An average age of 44 years rising by 10 months per year
3. A majority of females in the under 40 years age group
4. Uneven geographic distribution of teachers on the basis of age and thus experience
5. Rising retirement rates
6. Falling resignation rates
7. Small expected increases in student numbers
8. Weak demand for beginning teachers at present
9. Strong demand for teachers as retirements peak later
10. Uneven geographic demand for beginning teachers overall both now and in the near future.

Implications of the Ageing Teacher Population: Signposts to the Future

There are a number of serious implications arising from the above situation. Rather than considering these implications as inevitable, they are considered in this paper as "signposts" to destinations that education is already travelling towards or roads it may travel down in the future. There is still both time and opportunity to avoid some of these "destinations" or outcomes, although some are almost upon us.

Firstly, there will be limited opportunity overall for new teachers to enter teaching, yet possible teacher shortages when retirement begins to "bite" over the next two decades. At present, there is pressure on teacher training institutions to reduce their intakes and it is common for some teachers to wait four to five years for an initial appointment, yet the supply and demand situation is very uneven, with some schools unable to obtain casual (emergency) teachers or permanent staff. Older teachers are also generally less mobile due to financial and family commitments, and thus there are difficulties in balancing supply and demand across the state. These difficulties are more likely to increase than decrease given current trends.

In addition, up to 25% of "new" teachers are actually mature aged, exacerbating the ageing and mobility problems mentioned above. Given the four to five year turn around time in increasing teacher supply through training additional teachers, it may be tempting for educational employers to look to overseas to help meet demand for teachers, something that occurred in Australia during the shadow "baby boom" of the 1970s. However, it may not be so easy this time, as the traditional "markets" for imported teachers, the U.K., U.S.A. and Canada, are likely to experience similar problems. It may be necessary to look to Asia and elsewhere to meet any teacher shortfalls and/or to act to attract former teachers back to teaching through improved pay and conditions. It may also be necessary to increase the mobility of teachers between Australia's states and territories, something which is difficult at present due to differing credentialling requirements.

The feminisation of the teaching force mentioned previously is most apparent in primary and early childhood education, although it is also manifest in secondary teaching. For example, at the 1995 autumn graduation ceremonies held at the writer's university, the following teachers graduated:

Table 1: 1995 Autumn Graduation University of Western Sydney Nepean

Course	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total
Secondary Grad Dip Ed [1 yr]	36 (37.1%)	61 (62.9%)	97
Secondary BEd [4 yr]	7 (50.0%)	7 (50.0%)	14
Secondary Overall	**43 (38.7%)**	**68 (61.3%)**	**111**
Primary BEd [4yr]	8 (10.6%)	67 (89.4%)	75
Primary BTeach [3 yr]	22 (17.2%)	106 (82.8%)	128
Primary Overall	**30 (14.8%)**	**173 (85.2%)**	**203**
Early Childhood BEd [4 yr]	0 (0%)	11 (100%)	11
Early Childhood DipTeach [3 yr]	2 (3.7%)	52 (96.3%)	54
Early Childhood Overall	**2 (3.1%)**	**63 (96.9%)**	**65**
TOTAL	**75 (19.8%)**	**304 (80.2%)**	**379**

Source: Student Administration, UWS Nepean

De Lyon and Migniuolo (In De Lyon and Widdowson, 1989: pp. 3-7) note a similar under-representation of males entering teaching in Britain and make the point that the pattern of entry today is likely to be with us for the next 30-40 years.

As well as the problem of males not being attracted to teaching, both male and female pre-service students do not fully represent the multicultural socio-economic diversity of Australian society today, most students still being "white, middle class" individuals with an English speaking background, although some are first and second generation Australians of non-English speaking European origins. People of Asian and Middle Eastern background, despite their increasing numbers in the community, are underrepresented in teacher pre-service programs (see Schools Council, 1990: p. 36).

Attracting more males to teaching appears problematic, with the previously used measures of lower entry standards and higher salaries for male teachers being unacceptable today. Of concern is the view held by certain cultural groups that teaching is "women's work", and more generally, the lack of representative role models in schools.

There are further implications arising from the ageing teacher population in Australia. Again, these are signposts rather than inevitable outcomes. They include the following:

1 Age can increase the "distance" between teachers and their pupils, who may view them more as grandparents than parental figures. As a result, *in loco parentis* is already giving way to *in loco grandparentis*. While age can bring experience and wisdom, it can also lead to a lack of understanding or appreciation of the nature,

pressures and demands of family life and society today. The Schools Council (1990: pp. 104-108) examined "phases in teachers' lives" based upon the literature, and identified the following stages:

1. **Career Entry**: 'Reality shock' - survival and discovery
2. **Stabilisation**: Developing commitment
3. **Diversification and Change**: Experimentation
4. **Stock Taking**: 'I wondered whether I was doomed to die in front of a blackboard with a piece of chalk in my hand'
5. **Serenity**: 'Keeping your distance with increasing certainty'
6. **Conservatism**: 'Things aren't like they used to be'
7. **Disengagement**: Golf and the garden have priority

If indeed, Australia's teachers are entering the latter stages or phases outlined above, then this is of concern if teachers are to remain committed, enthusiastic and forward looking. (see also Maeroff, 1988: pp. 32-34).

2 The sheer amount and pace of change in recent years, which shows no sign of easing, may have been costly in terms of teachers' trust, loyalty and commitment. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some teachers have reacted to this by "retreating" to their classrooms and staffrooms, and that it is more difficult to find volunteers willing to take on additional responsibilities in schools, possible evidence of the "serenity", "conservatism", and "disengagement" phases above (see Dinham, 1995). "Professional isolation" of teachers (see Lortie, in Fullen and Hargreaves, 1991: p. 5) has been observed as a condition of teaching for some time, as has its propensity to limit the adoption of new ideas and innovation, while producing conservatism. The worry is that change, coupled with the ageing of teachers, may worsen the prevalence of this limiting factor.

3 The difference between "good" and "ordinary" schools is often not so much geographic location or resources, but the time and energy staff put into extra-curricular activities, the "icing" on the education "cake" (Dinham, Cairney, Craigie & Wilson, 1995). These activities vary widely from sport to cultural pursuits and all require great commitment and goodwill on the part of staff. It is problematic that these can be fully provided in a school with a markedly aged population, particularly in light of the "retreating" phenomenon mentioned above.

4 Schools and systems benefit from teachers fresh from tertiary pre-service training, yet this throughput is now limited, particularly in "favourable" regions where younger teachers don't get the opportunity to be change agents or the sources of new ideas and approaches. Recently appointed teachers and pre-service students even recount opposition they meet in schools, with older teachers using inappropriate texts, "outdated" teaching methods and the like, and urging them to "forget" the "theory" they have learned in their training. There is considerable pressure on a young teacher in a markedly aged school to conform and become enculturated with the prevailing ethos (Dinham, 1992a). On the other hand, there are still schools in "unfavourable" areas with large numbers of beginning teachers lacking experienced peers. One country head teacher recalled how his far western NSW high school had up to 20 new inexperienced teachers each year. After great efforts to inservice and develop these staff members, schools and systems in more favourable areas "picked the eyes out" of the best of these, and the whole process had to begin again (Dinham, 1995).

5 Further to the point raised above, there is anecdotal evidence that some teachers and even whole schools have developed strategies to largely avoid or resist syllabus or policy changes and the like, and pay only lip-service to change. When the issue is forced, for example when a new principal is appointed, the tidal wave of change that results can be traumatic for both staff and principal, although even

then, the degree to which such change filters down to the classroom and results in positive teaching and learning outcomes is questionable (Dinham, 1992a; personal communications with primary and secondary principals).

6 Resigned teachers have commented that brighter students are often dissuaded by their teachers from entering teaching, and that younger teachers are told by more experienced colleagues to "get out while they can" (Dinham, 1992a). Within families and society generally, there is pressure on school leavers not to "waste" or "spend" their HSC marks on teaching when they could do something else with higher entry standards. Thus, there is concern about the quality of people entering teaching, as well as their quantity.

7 Long periods of casual teaching prior to full time employment can result in the phenomenon of "detraining" and the learning of inappropriate "survival strategies" which are adequate for short periods of teaching, but can undermine a teacher's capacity and even confidence to take control of a class or series of classes permanently (Dinham 1992a, 1992b). As more and more teachers find it difficult to find employment due to lack of growth in student numbers and low teacher resignation rates, this phenomenon may well increase.

8 More able recent teaching graduates with marketable skills may not be prepared to wait up to five years for a full time job and may be lost to education forever without ever using the skills which their training has provided, further exacerbating problems associated with both quality and quantity of new teachers. There is concern that the diminishing number of male graduates may be particularly susceptible to finding other employment rather than enduring the precarious and at times taxing existence of the casual teacher.

9 When and if the economy recovers and teacher resignation rates rise again to their "normal" levels, it is arguable that those more likely to take advantage of this will be younger teachers with more marketable skills, a situation which will further exacerbate the ageing of the teaching population.

10 The lack of younger role models for students, particularly for boys and problematic in itself, may well further reinforce the stereotype that teaching is a "women's job", and a job for older women at that, increasing the difficulties in attracting males and younger teachers generally into teaching.

11 Resigned teachers interviewed by the writer commonly noted that the nature of society had changed since they went to school, and that they experienced something of a "culture shock" when appointed to schools. An ageing "middle class" teacher population may exacerbate this. It is difficult to cope with something one doesn't fully understand (Dinham, 1992a, 1995).

12 Despite some targeting of "outstanding graduates" by the DSE in NSW and some use of local hiring, there is still in existence the fairly illogical practice of posting the most inexperienced teachers to the more difficult and "unfavourable areas". If such teachers manage to survive this "baptism by fire", they are "rewarded" with a transfer or appointment to an "easier" school, reinforcing the geographic imbalance of teachers on the basis of age and quite possibly contributing to a wastage from the system of potentially fine teachers.

13 Teacher transfer can be invigorating, as well as giving a teacher the chance to make a fresh start and leave some of his or her problems behind, yet the present lack of mobility and opportunity for transfer is a problem. The irony is that the quest for "new blood" through local hiring, rather than filling teacher vacancies from transfer of experienced teachers, can make it even more difficult for older teachers to move.

14 Retirements will peak in the "aged", more favourable regions first, requiring greater mobility to fill these places. Will these replacements be older teachers who have "waited their turn", or will the opportunity be taken to introduce younger teachers to these regions characterised at present by very experienced staff? It is ironic that reported incidences of teacher stress are highest in NSW at the present time in the highly favoured "older" regions of the North and South Coast, and not in the traditionally "difficult" areas in the far west of the state and in inner and western Sydney (personal communications with DSE officials).

15 Salary increments can be motivating, yet the vast majority teachers have been at the top of salary scales for some time. As many will never be promoted there is at present no tangible incentive to undertake professional development through higher study or other activities, a situation which may contribute to the "retreating" phenomenon mentioned above.

16 Retirement will become the chief contributor to teacher loss, surpassing resignation which has traditionally been the major source to this time (Baumgart, 1995: p.10). It may well be that many teachers who in the past would have resigned due to dissatisfaction or unsuitability for teaching will continue because of a lack of other options, their focus now upon retirement rather than professional development.

17 Early next century when retirements rise greatly, there may well be unmet demand for teachers in some geographic and specialist teaching areas. This will force the issue of what is considered to be "teachers' work" if this demand cannot be met from within and outside Australia, not necessarily a bad thing. Teacher shortages may have to be alleviated by the employment of para-professionals and the relieving of teachers and executive school staff of their most onerous administrative tasks, so that they can concentrate on more "professional" and intellectually stimulating and demanding pursuits. Higher pay and incentives for professional development could well play their part in this re conceptualisation of what teachers are expected to do.

18 On the other hand, if this essentially positive approach is not adopted, it may prove necessary, and politically popular, to adopt more draconian measures of determining teacher efficiency in an effort to remove the "dead wood", and the present methods of teacher allocation and transfer may come under scrutiny, with a more "military" model implemented to ensure a better balance of both supply and demand and youth and experience in schools.

19 "Forced" transfers may become more commonplace, and the concept of tenure abolished in favour of shorter term contractual arrangements, and school closures more common as certain geographic areas experience a dearth of school age children. The use of retrenchment packages may be used to induce some older teachers to retire, yet as mentioned previously, there may will be chronic teacher shortages, with the two issues of ageing teachers and teacher shortages at cross purposes. An additional point is that with the abolition of compulsory retiring ages, some teachers could well teach (and some no doubt very successfully), well into their 70s.

20 Finally, teacher shortages and concern with the efficacy of older teachers may force the issue of the widespread adoption of distance education and the greater use of technology in education, with some teachers who cannot adapt reduced to the status of child minders as they await retirement.

Teacher Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

It is useful at this juncture to reflect on teachers' and school administrators' sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. If sources of dissatisfaction can be reduced and measures taken to increase teacher satisfaction, there is a greater chance that all teachers, and in particular more experienced teachers, will remain motivated and enthusiastic about their role.

This section draws both upon the literature and an interview study carried out to examine the phenomenon of teacher resignation (Dinham 1992a). A more recent interview study of teachers' partners also informed this discussion (Dinham 1995).

What Satisfies Teachers?

There was a very high degree of consensus as to the sources of career satisfaction from those interviewed. In most aspects, these findings strongly supported previous findings of the literature.

The greatest source of satisfaction was clearly pupil achievement, and thus teacher accomplishment. Such achievement ranged from the child who mastered a simple task or concept for the first time to the student who achieved success in the H.S.C. and later life. Many of those interviewed spoke of a "light going on", and of the sparkle of wonder in a student's eye when something became clear for the first time. There was a clear preference for the facilitation of pupil learning rather than mere instruction or the transfer of knowledge, teachers gaining more from "leading" and "facilitating" than "telling".

Changing pupil behaviour and attitudes were also significant sources of satisfaction, many of those interviewed noting how troublesome students or students not interested in school had "come around" over time due to their efforts.

Recognition from others was a strong source of satisfaction, whether the recognition came from parents, other teachers or superiors. More experienced teachers gained satisfaction from recognition for out of class activities and whole school roles, although many maintained, even at the highest levels of the Department, that their greatest satisfaction had come from classroom teaching rather than administration or higher duties associated with promotion.

Self-growth and the mastery of both subject content and teaching skills were also sources of satisfaction. Less experienced teachers gained satisfaction from achieving a satisfactory learning environment or from successfully undertaking a task such as organising an excursion, while more experienced teachers gained satisfaction from wider roles such as whole school activities and responsibilities such as running a department, or completing a higher qualification. Thus, less experienced teachers were very classroom centred, while more experienced teachers tended to be more school centred, in their sources of satisfaction.

Good relationships with students, parents, and other teachers were also commonly recognised sources of satisfaction, as was later contact with former students who spoke favourably of the contribution the teacher had made to their development

Overall, teacher satisfaction was found to be tied up closely in what could be termed the human or affective domain and centred on achievement, both of pupils and of themselves, and of recognition for this.

Sources of Teacher Dissatisfaction

Again, strong commonalities emerged which tended to support the findings of the literature, although some of the sources of dissatisfaction identified related more to the particular context of the resignation study and in particular, to the "reforms" to education since the late 1980s.

Apart from context specific factors such as changes to staffing ratios, promotions procedures, school management, and so on, the sources of dissatisfaction identified by the respondents tended to be school and system centred and related more to administration and other extraneous factors, whereas the sources of satisfaction tended to be classroom centred and more related to the actual task of teaching. Relationships with superiors and educational employers , along with the standing of teachers in society, were found to be common sources of dissatisfaction.

Isolation in small schools and towns, the "culture shock" of an unfamiliar socio-economic environment and unwanted transfers were also common sources of dissatisfaction, as were the increased expectations placed by society on schools and teachers to solve the problems society seemed unwilling or unable to deal with. Principals and other school executive spoke of the role conflict inherent in the need to provide educational leadership while managing and marketing schools in the current climate of devolution of responsibility and competition between schools.

Broadly speaking, the sources of dissatisfaction for those interviewed could be said to be structural or administrative, while the sources of satisfaction were more of a human, affective nature. The major exception was relationships, which had the potential to contribute powerfully to both satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

Teacher Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction: Relation of the Study Findings to the Literature

Overall there was strong confirmation in the study of the generally accepted sources and nature of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The work of Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman (1959), Sergiovanni (1967), Holdaway (1978) and Kaufman (1984) had suggested that satisfaction and dissatisfaction were the results of largely separate sets of factors (although others have disputed this). This was confirmed in the study with teacher satisfaction being found to be more classroom centred and revolving around the work itself, while teacher dissatisfaction was found to be more school and system centred and revolved around the conditions of work such as policies, procedures and administration. The study findings in regard to satisfaction and dissatisfaction were also broadly consistent with the earlier work of Maslow (1954), McClelland (1961), Vroom (1964), Argyris (1964) and Alderfer (1972).

However, what was revealed by the study that the literature had not mentioned was the importance of context specific sources of dissatisfaction, which in the case of both studies, included the changes to education since the late 1980s resulting from the increased politicisation of education.

It was a contention of the resignation study that because of the pace and scope of change, coupled with the increased expectations placed on schools, attention had been diverted away from facilitating teacher satisfaction. Teachers commonly recounted giving out more and more "positive reinforcement" to students while receiving less and less genuine recognition for their efforts. As a result of the findings of the study, a series of strategies were advocated as a means of enhancing teacher satisfaction, although it was acknowledged that there were no "quick fix" solutions to the problem (see Dinham, 1994). The study found that salary was largely a neutral factor in determining both teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the implication being that

salary increases will not necessarily result in a satisfied, motivated teaching force, despite the fact that teachers' unions and governments alike often see pay rises as the panacea for teachers' complaints about teaching.

In brief, the strategies addressed the issues of:

1. Public Recognition of Staff Achievement
2. Exit and Other Interviews
3. Publicity
4. The "Invisible" Principal and Communication
5. Positive Relationships
6. Supportive Supervision
7. Pupil Achievement
8. The Personal Touch
9. The Physical Environment
10. The Burden of Administrivia, Policies and Procedures
11. Resources
12. The Issue of Change
13. Society's Expectations and Criticisms
14. Teacher Stress (see Dinham, 1993, for a fuller discussion of stress)

Addressing the Issue of the Ageing Teacher Population: Discussion

As highlighted to this point, the issue of the ageing of Australia's teaching population is a complex one, with at times conflicting considerations. It is argued that as a first step, attention be given to considering and addressing the phenomenon and the issues and implications arising from it at three levels: the system, the school, and the individual or personal. What follows is presented for discussion purposes, although the suggested strategies are grounded in research carried out by the writer and others. In no way is the series of suggested strategies thought to be exhaustive. In addition, many are already the subject of some discussion and debate, and there is obvious overlap between the three levels.

1. Possible Actions at the System Level

1.1 The current and likely situation offers the opportunity to alter existing staffing ratios thereby reducing class sizes. This would increase the demand for teachers immediately, rather than later when retirement begins to "bite", and would enable schools to take on younger teachers to provide a better balance of youth and experience and partly redress the ageing of the teaching population.

1.2 Another possibility is job sharing and/or permanent part time work, where older teachers might reduce their working week to four or three days and share their duties with a younger teacher, both of whom may benefit from the arrangement.

1.3 Salary scales need to be restructured to encourage and recognise new qualifications and skills gained by teachers. At present, for example, someone who completes a Masters degree is paid no more than a person with only a four year undergraduate qualification. The fact that so many teachers are at the top of salary scales and will not be able to be promoted, and may have become disillusioned because of this, could be counterproductive to meeting such teachers' ongoing professional development needs.

1.4 To restore teacher mobility, both "challenge" and "deficit" models may be needed. Deficit models assume teachers need to be compensated for teaching in unfavourable areas, while challenge models stress the benefits to the individual of teaching and living in such areas, such as greater responsibility at an earlier age and the opportunity for more rapid promotion (Watson, Hatton, Squires, & Soliman, 1989). If one or a combination of both approaches fails, a more "military" model of teacher allocation may be required where teachers are sent to places of greatest need. It has been a given that younger teachers will predominate in more difficult areas, while more experienced teachers will be found in more favourable areas. As well as being illogical pedagogically and from a personal development perspective, this phenomenon is predicated on a degree of mobility within systems. However, as has been demonstrated, this mobility is disappearing and thus the whole matter called into question.

1.5 Industry placement for periods of time such as a term or even a year offers older teachers the opportunity to update their skills and knowledge and to be rejuvenated, while opening up opportunities for younger teachers. Both schools and industry could also benefit from this arrangement.

1.6 Paid sabbatical/study leave for older teachers would also enable skills, knowledge and formal qualifications to be updated and could be awarded both on a competitive basis and as recognition for achievement.

1.7 A system of teacher exchange with other systems and/or regions would enable teachers, both experienced and inexperienced, to encounter fresh contexts and ideas, and benefit schools through their presence. At present, the lack of mobility militates against such new experiences.

1.8 Staff development and training should be tailored more to the individual needs of teachers and schools to ensure that professional and personal needs are met. A problem lies in assisting "retreating" teachers to come to an understanding of their own needs and to be assisted to undertake activities and processes to achieve these.

1.9 "Financial imprisonment" due to superannuation needs to be overcome by early retirement funding support and/or retraining schemes for disaffected or redundant teachers. Teachers who decide to take advantage of such schemes should be adequately recognised for their contribution to education, and not feel that they have been "bought" or "pushed" out.

1.10 More effective teacher appraisal schemes need to be developed and introduced to enable both strengths and weaknesses in teachers to be identified. Those who are not performing to expectations and who are not willing to undertake the staff development necessary to perform their role, particularly those with many years of teaching in front of them, may need to have their employment terminated or at least be persuaded that leaving teaching is both in their and their students' interests. Hopefully, matters can be resolved without reaching this point.

1.11 The present pressures to reduce pre-service teaching intakes are short sighted, given the likely and indeed current shortages in some areas. Greater strategic planning is needed in the area of teacher training to ensure that schools and systems have access to teachers of sufficient quantity and quality. If there is the necessity to temporarily reduce pre-service intakes, the opportunity should be grasped to increase the quality of those entering such programs.

1.12 As retirements escalate, systems may well have to pursue overseas recruitment. Forward planning should begin now, to ensure that overseas teachers sought in this matter will have the requisite skills to contribute productively to Australian systems and schools. It may even be necessary to establish measures of financial

support such as scholarships for outstanding overseas teachers still involved in pre-service training, as well as for local teacher trainees.

1.13 Efforts need to be made to attract underrepresented groups such as males and those of non-English speaking backgrounds to teaching. This is a potentially "touchy" issue as is any initiative involving affirmative action, yet it is vital that the teaching force is representative of the general society it serves.

1.14 Above all, the situation of massive retirements of teachers who will take with them many years of experience and tremendous accumulated expertise needs to be avoided through forward planning and not ad hoc, reactive decision making. Similarly, the growing geographic imbalances of teachers on the basis of age must be addressed through some of the measures outlined above.

2. Possible Actions at the School Level

2.1 Efforts need to be made to reverse the "retreating" phenomenon mentioned earlier and to establish real, as opposed to, "contrived collegiality" (Fullen and Hargreaves, 1991: p. 58). There needs to be openness and genuine joint collaboration and planning within a climate where all teachers feel valued and supported. Strategies found to reduce dissatisfaction and to increase satisfaction and motivation should be employed (see Dinham, 1994). The phenomenon of "balkanisation" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 18) that seems endemic and increasing in many schools needs to be redressed and communication and thereby cooperation reestablished.

2.2 Local hiring of teachers, particularly in the "favourable" areas worst affected by the ageing phenomenon, is one way of injecting "new blood" into schools, yet transfer rights to these more desirable areas also need to be preserved to maintain mobility and an incentive to teach in isolated/difficult areas, and thus a workable combination of both approaches needs to be put into place, a matter taken up in some detail in the Baumgart Review (1995).

2.3 Because of general demographic trends, schools may need to engage in greater competition for students and even possibly for younger teachers. Falling enrolments frequently result in fewer opportunities for both students and staff, and thus changing present staffing ratios could prevent or limit the impact of this. On the other hand, nominated or "forced" transfers in schools with declining numbers can result in the "rubber ball" syndrome whereby perceived poorly performing teachers are transferred from school to school on a "last in, first out" basis, never having their professional and personal development needs addressed and destroying their confidence and self-worth.

2.4 Schools need to actively present and model the rewards of teaching to students, unlike the present situation where brighter students appear to be actively discouraged from taking up teaching in some cases (Dinham, 1992a). If teachers appear as disillusioned and unrepresentative role models, the reverse will occur and the situation worsen by reinforcing itself.

2.5 Schools need to individually assess the needs of all teachers and work to meeting these through staff development and supervisory processes. Training and development, while reflecting system priorities, should also be driven from the grass roots up by school and teacher needs.

2.6 Sources of teacher and administrator stress and dissatisfaction need to be recognised and acted upon. It is not enough to simply apply the palliative measures of the present such as medication, leave taking, resignation or simply

"soldiering on" (Dinham, 1993). Stress needs to be acknowledged as a legitimate occupational hazard and not a sign of weakness or personal failing. Unless stress is meaningfully addressed, it seems likely that reported instances of stress will rise dramatically as the teaching population ages and impose an increasing financial burden on governments, systems and schools, not to mention on individuals and their families (Dinham, 1995).

2.7 In particular, schools need to place a major emphasis upon establishing and maintaining positive relationships with students, staff and the community, something which can equally affect both teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction, depending upon the nature of these relationships. True and representative student and community involvement in education still seems to be lacking. However, where this involvement is forthcoming, it is apparent that many of the misconceptions and criticisms the community has about schools and education tend to dissipate (see Dinham, et. al., 1995).

2.8 Schools need to consider the question of workload equity. Frequently, it is the willing worker to whom delegation of responsibility is made, while poorly performing teachers are usually not asked nor volunteer to take on the additional yet vital extra curricular tasks which make such a difference to school climate and culture. Teachers lack accurate role descriptions, and the open-ended nature of the job means that there are always additional tasks that could be done (see Flinders, cited by Fullen and Hargreaves, 1991: p. 40). High and rising expectations from both teachers themselves and society may thus translate into feelings of dissatisfaction or even failure when these expectations fail to be realised. As a first step, it would seem timely for both systems and schools to reconsider and possibly rationalise what is expected of teachers and to consider the possibility of reallocating some of the more onerous and "non-professional" tasks to other para-professionals to leave teachers free to concentrate on the "core business" of teaching. Such a review should also include the increasingly "overcrowded" curriculum.

3. Possible Actions at the Individual Level

3.1 A major exigency inherent in the above discussion is for teachers to receive assistance to assess and come to an acceptance of their personal and professional needs. Teachers and their supervisors then need both the capacity in terms of skills and resources and the opportunity to work together to see these needs are met. Teachers thus need to be able to reflect on and discuss with relevant peers and superiors their needs. Where personal and professional deficiencies are identified, teachers need assistance to formulate appropriate means to overcome these in a climate free from guilt, pressure and rancour. Cries of teachers being "out of touch", "shellbacks" and "dead wood" are best avoided through action rather than putting up barriers and "retreating".

3.2 Teachers need to become aware that the difficulties they face are a result of societal change, and not necessarily a result of an unappreciative and critical society and system and/or personal failure. Feelings of guilt and disillusionment need be ameliorated through understanding and communication. Too often, teachers (and their partners) have a perspective that is very much school and system based, and fail to recognise the wider pressures and demands shaping education. Some even perceive educational change as being "punishment" (Dinham 1992a, 1995). As result, schools need to find the time to inform teachers of the wider educational contingencies.

3.3 Teachers and school executive need to be happy, healthy, motivated, and kept up to date with developments in their field, if they are to understand, contribute to

and cope with the educational and social change that is certain to continue in the future. To this end, stress and time management skills need to be developed in teachers and school executive. Teachers also need to understand, through pre-service and in-service professional development programs, the impacts that teaching can have upon themselves and their families (Dinham, 1995) and the means through which they and their families can cope with these pressures and demands.

3.4 Finally, although it sounds trite, teachers need to regard change as challenging and revitalising, rather than threatening and overwhelming. To this end, their relationship with school and system superiors and peers appears a vital factor. Above all, teachers need to feel that they are both supported and valued. There are key roles for both leadership and collegiality in empowering teachers in these processes and developing more positive system and school cultures.

Conclusion

There are no "quick fixes" to the issues raised by the ageing of Australia's teaching population. The first step is high level recognition that there is indeed a problem, followed by the will, planning and resources necessary to address it.

It is probably impossible to reverse the trend at the present time due to the sheer numbers of teachers and students involved, and the high cost of education generally. We must learn - and quickly - to cope with the challenges raised by the ageing teacher population over at least the next 20 years.

The question of the aging of the Australian teaching population, while confirmed, is complex and in need of further research (see Logan, Dempster, Chant and Warry, 1990: pp. 2-8) . Certainly, there is some research evidence to suggest that the age of 40 marks a watershed in teachers' lives and careers (see Howse, in Maclean and McKenzie, 1991: 166), and the fact that the average Australian teacher now exceeds this age calls for additional, more context specific research. Howse (p. 170) makes the salient point that research into what the 40 year old teacher was like in the 1970s and 1980s may no longer be relevant today. It should also be noted that while presenting possible problems, the aging of the teaching population might also bring with it unforeseen benefits.

Finally, let it be clear that it is not the intention of this paper to in any way denigrate the contribution that older teachers make to education. As mentioned previously, all teachers need to feel valued and to be both supported and recognised for their efforts. What is being stressed is the necessity for a balance of youth and experience in the teaching profession, particularly in an era of rapid social and educational change. For a number of reasons, that balance is disappearing rapidly. There has always been something of a "generation gap" between teachers and their students. Already, that is becoming a "two generation gap" through the growing absence of the "missing generation", the under thirties, in teaching. "*In loco grandparentis*" may not be as silly as it appears on the surface.

Note:

Many of the ideas above are grounded in research carried out by the writer and have been further developed and validated in presentations and workshops with school principals, other staff, and postgraduate students. Their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

References

Alderfer, C.P. (1972). *Existence, Relatedness and Growth: Human Needs in Organisational Settings*. New York: Free Press.

Argyris, C. (1964). *Integrating the Individual and the Organisation*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Baumgart, N. (1995). *Staffing of New South Wales Public Schools: A Review*. Sydney: NSW Department of School Education.

Bourke, S. (1994). "Some Responses to Changes in Australian Education", *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 21(1), April.

De Lyon, H. & Widdowson, F.W. (Eds) (1989). Women Teachers Issues and Experiences. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Dinham, S. (1992a). "Human Perspectives on the Resignation of Teachers From the New South Wales Department of School Education: Towards a Model of Teacher Persistence", unpublished PhD thesis, University of New England, Armidale.

Dinham, S. (1992b). "Teacher Induction: Implications for Administrators", *The Practising Administrator*, 14(4), November.

Dinham, S. (1993). "Teachers Under Stress", *Australian Educational Researcher*, 20(3), December.

Dinham, S. (1994). "Enhancing the Quality of Teacher Satisfaction", paper presented to the National Conference of the Australian College of Education, Launceston, September 28-30th, 1994.

Dinham, S. (1995). "The Impact of Teaching on Teachers' Partners", Faculty of Education, UWS Nepean, March 31st.

Dinham, S.; Cairney, T.; Craigie, D. & Wilson, S. (1995). "School Climate and Leadership: Research Into Three Secondary Schools", *Journal of Educational Administration*, 33 (4), August. [in press]

Fullan, M.G. & Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's Worth Fighting For? Working Together for your School*. Melbourne: ACEA.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times*. London: Cassell.

Herzberg, F.; Mausner, B. & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The Motivation to Work*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Hewett, R. (1990). "Teachers ... Going, Going ... Gone", *Education*, April 2.

Holdaway, E.A. (1978). "Facet and Overall Satisfaction of Teachers", *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 14(1), winter.

Hughes, P.W. (Ed) (1991). *Teachers' Professional Development*. Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER.

Kaufman, J.W. (1984). "Relationship Between Teacher Motivation and Commitment to the Profession. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association", New Orleans, 23-27 April, 1984.

Logan, L.; Dempster, N.; Chant, D., & Warry, M. (1990). *Teachers in Australian Schools: Trends in the Service 1963-1989.* Deakin, A.C.T.: The Australian College of Education.

Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation And Productivity.* New York: Harper and Brothers.

Maclean, R. & McKenzie, P. (Eds) (1991). *Australian Teachers' Careers.* Hawthorn, Victoria: ACER.

McClelland, D.C. (1961). *The Achieving Society.* Princeton: Van Nostrand Inc.

Maeroff, G.I. (1988). *The Empowerment of Teachers.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Personnel and Employee Relations Directorate, NSW Department of School Education. (1994). *Demand and Supply of Teachers in NSW Government Schools 1995-2000.* Sydney: NSW DSE.

Schools Council (National Board of Employment, Education and Training). (1990). *Australia's Teachers An Agenda for the Next Decade.* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Sergiovanni T. (1967). Factors Which Affect Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction of Teachers. *The Journal of Educational Administration,* 5(1).

Vroom, V.H. (1964). *Work and Motivation.* New York: Wiley.

Walmsley, D.J. & Sorensen, A.D. (1993). *Contemporary Australia.* (2nd Ed). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Watson, A.; Hatton, N.; Squires, D., & Soliman, I. (1989) *The Staffing of Schools: A Study of Teacher Stability and Mobility.* Sydney: N.S.W. Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs.

Author

Steve Dinham BA, DipTeach, MEdAdmin, PhD is Head of the Department of Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

Postal Address: PO Box 10 Kingswood 2747
Phone: 047 360275
Fax: 047 360400
Email: s.dinham@uws.edu.au